

14 January 1961
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(1/21/61)

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Hugh S. Canning, Jr.
The Director of Intelligence and Research
Department of State

SUBJECT: Views Ambassador

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lowing views on world problems:

"The Soviet Government -- I mean Khrushchev -- wants a talk with Kennedy. I'm told he said so during that long meeting in Moscow and he certainly told it to Gennika. I don't believe he feels that he can settle all the problems between you with a talk. What I would say he wants is to get some impetus behind a disarmament agreement and also to prove that this new administration of yours is willing to do business with him.

"The Russians don't really know anything about Kennedy. They are trying to find every smidgeon of information they can about him and how he thinks. This man they have as ambassador in Washington is being comical in the way he tries to find out. But he has his orders. So, he goes about it the only way he knows how to do it.

"I don't know much about the fighting in Laos. It seems to me that you put money on wrong horses again. Yes, you say that you expected me to say that. The point is that the Russians want some way of extracting themselves from out there, too. It isn't easy for the Russians to pump in military aid into Laos right on the Chinese doorstep. Had they refused you would have certainly seen Chinese aid, demonstrably delivered; maybe along with their 'volunteers'. If the Russians didn't show their presence, they would have certainly been accused of having violated the Moscow all-party declaration on helping out revolutions. To me, this means they go to the brink but not over it.

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- 2 -

"Your idea is that most of this alarm about Chinese intentions is phoney. I refer to intentions that call for 'going for broke', as we used to say. I believe it. They have a lot less to lose under present circumstances than anyone else. Try to look at this pragmatically. You are not going to submit to a Soviet disarmament plan. Any such agreement -- hard as it is to work out -- will have to be with some kind of compromise. That's also the way it's going to be with the nuclear test-ban negotiations. These agreements, if they come, won't change your minds about the Russians and vice-versa. They will be a chance for both of you to regulate lots of other countries with the opportunity to become so-called nuclear powers. Sure, it stops the Germans; but it also stops the Chinese. The Chinese, by the way, have a strange outlook on neutral countries. They see the need for Hanoi's revolution to be replaced by another revolution. They also say that the Sudan is really more committed than uncommitted. They also said -- in Moscow -- that Nehru was running a capitalist society.

"At the moment, I think it looks pretty certain for Khrushchev to go to the UN in March, when it resumes session. He'd go, I believe, to try and have an opportunity to see Kennedy, by hook or crook. He doesn't embarrass, as you know, and it also would show in a propaganda way that he will do anything to seek peace. I would say that the results of the feelers put out by the Russians and the beginnings of the resumed nuclear test talks will make up Khrushchev's mind for him.

"As for us? We will stay on the Khrushchev line, as you call it. There are so damned many problems we have at home that we cannot get involved in too many outside questions. It's all out of our hands, in any case. We cannot do even a part of what the United Kingdom can do to try to persuade you or alter your opinions. There will probably be one thing that we will carry out: If there is no sign of any improvement in your relations with the Russians, we'll probably be the genial hosts for a Warsaw Pact meeting that gives a separate treaty to East Germany.

"I, personally, do not believe that Khrushchev is terribly keen on such a treaty. It creates too many

- 3 -

complications, for him as well. No matter what you may think, I am pretty convinced that he has no stars in his eyes about the East Germans and certainly not Ulbricht. But Ulbricht is a very useful guy; so he is used."

Richard Helms
Acting Deputy Director (Plans)

RHelms/ecd - 11/1/61

cc: DCI ✓
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